GENERAL SECRETARIAT.

Forest Administration.

READ—

The Report on the working of the Forest Department during the year ending 30th June 1922, received with letter No. 231, dated 1st October 1922, from the Offg. Conservator of Forests in Mysore.

ORDER NO. I. C. 4642-54—FT. 116-22-23, DATED 25TH JANUARY 1923.

Recorded.

2. The total area of State Forests and Reserved Lands under the control of the Forest Department during the year was 3365·25 sq. miles and 350 sq. miles respectively. Nine blocks of an aggregate area of 25·19 sq. miles were added to the State Forests and ten blocks of an area of 70·09 sq. miles were notified as Reserved Lands under Section 4 of the Forest Regulation. In addition, an area of 5·04 sq. miles was constituted as Sandal Reserves under Section 35 of the Regulation.

Government notice with regret that in spite of the repeated attention drawn by them to the inordinate delay on the part of the Revenue Officers in completing the work of Forest Settlement, the progress made during the year was anything but satisfactory. Only 3 blocks are reported to have been settled during the whole of the year and 39 cases are still pending disposal. Government desire once again to impress upon the Revenue Officers the need of urgent attention being paid to this important work.

During the year, Government ordered, as an experimental measure, that three important Amrut Mahal kavals in the Kadur District should be placed under the management of the Forest Department so far as forest conservancy was concerned, the grazing rights in the area being reserved to the Amrut Mahal Department as usual. If the experiment proves successful the extension of the scheme to the other large areas now under the control of the Amrut Mahal Department will receive consideration.

3. The scheme of constituting Village Forests has proved successful and popular. One hundred and four such forests with a total area of 66 square miles were in existence at the close of the year.

4. The much discussed question about the duality of control over District Forests by the Forest and the Revenue Departments, which has been the subject of constant complaint both in the Representative Assembly and otherwise, is engaging the attention of Government. The question is not one that is free from difficulties, but Government believe that it should be possible to formulate proposals which, while satisfying the legitimate demands of the raiyat population, will still ensure the preservation and improvement of valuable areas in the interest of the people themselves.

5. About 140 miles of new demarcation lines were cleared and 4,654 miles repaired during the year. The Conservator of Forests does not state what the length of lines yet remaining to be demarcated and repaired is. It has been repeatedly brought to the notice of Government that the forest boundaries are in many cases brought too near the inhabited areas, and that in consequence people are put to considerable difficulty. Government have reason to believe that, while in many cases the grievances complained of may be somewhat exaggerated, there are still a few cases in which, at the time of the settlement of the forests, adequate attention was not paid by the Settlement Officers concerned to this aspect of the question, and that forest boundary lines may have been brought too near the villages. Government would be glad if the District Forest Officers were instructed by the Conservator to re-examine the existing forest boundaries and to send up proposals for their realignment in cases where it is found that the existing arrangement is causing real inconvenience to the raiyat propulation.

6. The Government are pleased to note that the Forest District Maps are nearing completion and will shortly be ready for publication. The work of Forest Surveys during the year was satisfactory, 189·554 square miles having been surveyed as against 134·67 square miles in the previous year.

7. The total area of State Forests which are being worked in accordance with sanctioned working plans is 1515 square miles. This forms about 45·02 per cent of the total area of the State Forests. Three Working Plan Officers were at work during the year and the total area explored was 148 square miles.

The Conservator of Forests has stated that the working plan of the Devarayandurga Forest in the Tumkur District having lapsed, the preparation of a revised plan for the forest was taken up during the year. This is an important forest area, and Government will welcome detailed information regarding the result of the working of the area according to the old working plan and the lines on which the Conservator would propose the preparation of a fresh working plan in this instance.

Government agree with the Conservator that in many cases the working plans previously prepared are now obsolete and unsuited to the conditions of the present day. The revision of the plans is therefore an urgent necessity. It would, however, appear to be necessary to make some arrangements by which the attention of the Working Plan Officers and the District Forest Officers might be bestowed both on the exploration of new areas and the revision of the plans for the areas already explored, with a view to finding out how far the prescriptions laid down in the sanctioned plans have proved successful and in what respects they require to be modified.

8. During the year a length of three miles and one furlong of new forest roads was constructed, the total amount spent on this work and on repairs done to the existing roads being Rs. 17,862. The deterioration of the roads on which there is heavy timber traffic has been the subject of some criticism. The question of fixing the liability of the District Boards and the Public Works Department on the one hand and the Forest Department on the other, in the matter of the maintenance of such roads as are subject to heavy wear and tear on account of the timber traffic thereon, is at present under the active consideration of Government.

9. Government note with satisfaction that there was no noticeable increase in the number of forest offences reported, the total number reported during the year being 1377. The delay on the part of the Magistracy in the disposal of these cases continues to be considerable; and, as the Conservator has remarked, unless the offenders are promptly dealt with, the efforts of the Forest Department to prevent such offences must be in vain. The same inordinate delay in the disposal of sandal damage cases by the Revenue Officers, which was remarked upon by Government in their review of the work of the Department last year, was noticeable during the year under consideration. The number of cases reported during the year was 83. These with the 418 cases pending at the end of the previous year made a total of 501, of which the number disposed of during the year was only 67 (or 13·4 per cent) leaving a large balance of 434 cases yet to be dealt with. Government desire it to be understood that their observations regarding the delay and their repeated instructions for a more expeditious disposal of such cases cannot be allowed to remain a mere pious warning. The Revenue Commissioner is requested to report to Government for suitable notice the names of the officers who have largely contributed to these delays.

In this connection the Conservator has again represented that the only method by which such delays might be minimised is by investing the District Forest Officers with the powers of the disposal of such cases. Government have more than once expressed themselves as being against such a measure. The fact that offences falling under this class are such as should not be compounded, but deserve to be more rigorously dealt with stands in the way of the recommendations of the Conservator being seriously considered.

There were only three cases of theft of sandalwood during the year. The Conservator has no remarks to offer in regard to the extent to which smuggling of sandalwood across the Frontier is being carried on. Government have since sanctioned the establishment of a Police and Forest Frontier Patrol Staff to prevent smuggling of sandalwood across the Frontier and the result of the experiment will be watched.

10. The total area fire-protected during the year was 19,06,602 acres and the cost Rs. 45,803. 98·2 of the work done is reported to have been successful. The forests provided grazing for 2,20,794 bovines on payment of fees, the revenue realised from grazing being Rs. 72,372. It would be interesting to know what the value of grazing supplied free or at concession rates would be at full rates. The number of bovines, sheep and goats impounded during the year shows an increase upon that of the previous year.

There is a constant and widespread complaint that cattle are not being allowed to graze in the State Forests to as large an extent as they might be with a more liberal system of throwing open the State Forests for such grazing. It has also been urged that the period of 'close season' in State Forests might, with advantage both to the Forest Department and to the ryot, be reduced, and that in particular districts such forests might even be thrown open for grazing throughout the year. The average number of cattle supplied with grazing on payment in the State Forests during the past five years is 2,38,297 which is nearly 4 per cent of the total number of cattle in the State. Government are aware that many of the grievances expressed are exaggerated and that any drastic changes in the existing system of forest protection can only result in the gradual deterioration of the preserves. At the same time they consider that in individual cases where it is possible to allow greater latitude in the matter of grazing without injury to the tree growth in protected areas, the policy of throwing open the forests for grazing throughout the year, might be attempted after providing for sufficient safeguards against outbreaks of fire, excessive grazing, etc. Government have now under consideration the question of improving grazing facilities throughout the State, and in formulating their proposals these points will receive due attention.

11. The work of protection against injuries from natural causes, which consisted of uprootal of spiked sandal trees, lantana, prickly pear and loranthus and cutting of climbers, progressed satisfactorily.

Natural reproduction is stated to have been good in the Malnad and the Semi-Malnad parts of the State. Reproduction by coppice shoots is stated to have been very satisfactory in the Semi-Malnad forests, and particularly in the Tarikere and the Bhadravati Divisions, which are being exploited for fuel required for the Bhadravati Iron Works.

In regard to artificial reproduction new teak plantations of an aggregate area of 102 acres were formed in the Mysore West and South, Shimoga, Sagar, Tarikere and Kadur Divisions. The plantations in Govardhanagiri State Forest are reported to be particularly flourishing. Other methods of reproduction also were tried with a fair amount of success.

12. The total quantity of timber cut in the forests and removed to depots was 6,58,280 cubic feet and 7,03,599 cubic feet respectively as against 7,44,830 cubic feet and 6,64,836 cubic feet respectively in the previous year. The cost incurred on collection during the year was Rs. 2,50,764 against Rs. 2,92,994 in the previous year. The quantity sold during the year consisted of 6,44,682 cubic feet of timber, 22,786 cubic feet of sawn materials and 2,63,578 running feet of reepers and also 21,170 railway sleepers as against 6,29,041 cubic feet of timber and 22,286 railway sleepers in the year 1920-21. The total value of these materials was Rs. 8,82,649. The demand for timber during the year is reported to have been not very brisk and the prices also were unfavourable. A large quantity of timber was thus left on the hands of the Department.

The value of firewood and charcoal sold during the year was Rs. 30,997, showing a decrease of nearly Rs. 53,000 against that for last year, chiefly due to the falling off in the demand from the Sandal Oil Factories. The quantity of sandalwood (prepared) collected also showed a decrease on account of the restricted demand from the factories, being only 333 tons as against 1,114 tons collected in the previous year. The cost of collection amounted to Rs. 21,766. The Sandal Oil Factories were able to take only 537 tons of wood of the value of Rs. 6,84,794 during the year. "The revenue on account of minor forest produce collected and sold departmentally was only Rs. 1,972. This revenue is susceptible of improvement."

13. The net revenue from the exploitation of timber, sandalwood and other produce by departmental agency during the year amounted to Rs. 16 lakhs as against Rs. 25 lakhs in the previous year. The demand for standing timber amounted to Rs. 1 lakh and does not show any variation as against the demand in the previous year.

The Conservator remarks that with the unfavourable prices ruling throughout the year these results should be considered satistactory. He has since submitted certain proposals for the sale of standing timber which have been sanctioned by Government as an experimental measure. The results of the experiment will be carefully watched before an extension of the system is thought of.

The value of Minor Forest Produce collected by private agency amounted to Rs. 3,76,046, and showed a considerable increase over that for the previous year.

14. A quantity of 1,131 cubic feet of timber, 7,555 bamboos and 61 tons of fuel were granted free to ryots for reconstructing houses destroyed by fire.

15. The total gross revenue for the year (excluding amounts written off the accounts as irrecoverable and excluding refunds) was Rs. 26,09,913 as against Rs. 31,75,666 in the previous year. Of this Rs. 8·83 lakhs were contributed by sandalwood. Timber fetched Rs. 8·91 lakhs. The total expenditure under conservancy and works was Rs. 6·09 lakhs as against Rs. 6·74 lakhs in the previous year. The decrease noticeable under both revenue and expenditure was due to less extraction of sandalwood and fuel on account of closure of the Sandal Oil Factory at Mysore.

There was a large balance of Rs. 7·69 lakhs to be collected at the close of the year. Government observe that steps have not up-to-date been taken to recover the heavy balances on account of Minor Forest Produce leased in 1919-21. This forms the subject of a separate reference to the Conservator who is however requested to see that long standing accounts are adjusted without further delay.

16. The cadre of the Department was reduced by the abolition of two posts of Deputy Conservators. Government are glad to note that the health of the executive staff was generally satisfactory. It has been pointed out in the reviews on the Inspection Reports of the District Forest Offices that the production of security deposits from the officers concerned is not being insisted upon according to the codal rules. As this omission involves possible risks of loss of Government revenue, the Conservator is requested to enforce the rules strictly in all cases.

17. Experiments in *agriculture-cum-forrestry* were continued as in the previous year. 8 Kunbi families and one other indigent family comprising in all 19 adults and 5 childern,

are reported to have been newly settled during the year, bringing the total number of such families to 290. ; 11 of these families, however, became extinct during the year owing to the prevalence of pneumonia and other causes. The area under cultivation by these families at the close of the year was 1,005 acres, assessed at Rs. 2,142.

18. The Forest School was abolished towards the close of the year. Sixteen students passed out successfully, two obtaining honours. Government regret that on account of the large retrenchments that have had to be effected in the staff of the Department it has not yet been possible to provide employment for these trained students.

19. The total area covered by the Sandal Valuation Survey was 921.29 square miles in Mysore and Shimoga Districts. The attention of the Conservator is drawn to the remarks made by the Government last year under this head. Information called for about the extent of work remaining to be done, the time that is likely to be taken to complete the work, etc., has not been furnished.

20. The arrangements for the chance capture of elephants attempted on the occasion of the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales proved quite successful. In all, 29 elephants were captured, of which 7 were lost by death and other causes. The remaining 22 elephants were sold and fetched Rs. 40,350, fully covering the expenditure of about Rs. 36,000 incurred on the operation.

21. The Departmental Saw Mill at Shimoga was utilised for the preparation of rafters, beams and sleepers, and also dealt with timber brought by private people on payment of the usual sawing charges. The mill earned a net profit of about Rs. 19,000 as against Rs. 6,000 in the previous year. The proposals of the Conservator to expand the Saw Mill and to establish a bigger mill in the heart of the rich ghat forests near Megaravalli for the preparation of railway sleepers, for which a large demand is likely to develop in the near future, are receiving the consideration of Government.

22. Government appreciate the continued efforts of the Department in devising better and more comprehensive methods of exploiting the timber resources, and in familiarising the less known species of timber in outside markets, as also in experimenting with the various uses to which a few good species of local timber can easily lend themselves. The present method of supply of timber to private consumers would appear to stand in need of improvement. There has been frequent complaints both from private consumers and from the Government Departments that supplies of timber are not readily available, and that they cannot get into direct touch with the Department but have to obtain their supplies from the contractors. The rail-borne trade statistics show that while on an average 19,406 tons of timber and fuel are imported every year, the exports amount to 9,150 tons. Government consider that there is no reason why it should not be possible for private consumers to obtain their supplies direct from the Forest Department. The position is deserving of careful investigation by the Conservator, whose proposals in the matter will be awaited.

23. The Department continues to carry on researches and experiments in regard to various forest economic products. The cultivation of lac has proved successful, and about 5 cwts. of the stuff were collected during the year. 5,000 *Jalari* trees were newly inoculated, and are expected to yield about 100 maunds of seed lac. The future of this industry is full of promise.

24. Government note with satisfaction that the relations between the public and the Forest Department continue to be satisfactory. But the people at large are still far from looking with favour on the efforts of the Forest Department to conserve and protect forest growth which are expected ultimately to benefit both the Government and themselves. The problem is not so acute in the Malnad districts of the State where large areas containing sufficient tree growth are available for the use of the raiyats, even after bringing areas of potential value under the control of the Department. But conditions in the Maidan have to be viewed from a different standpoint, as here the people have necessarily to look to the State Forests to provide their most urgent supplies in the shape of fuel, grazing and building materials, and are in consequence brought into close contact with the officers of the Forest Department. A spirit of sympathy and understanding on the part of the officers and a stricter vigilance over the conduct of the subordinate staff will, Government are convinced, go a long way in engendering confidence in the minds of the people and enhancing the popularity of the Department as the guardian of public interests.

25. The statement attached to this review, which is based on statistics readily available, contains a few salient figures regarding the progress in the constitution of State Forests and the revenue derived therefrom during the last 20 years. Taking the cases of Chitaldrug District, for instance, it is found that while the percentage of State Forests to the total area of the district has increased from 1·77 to 8·63, the quantities of timber and fuel exploited and the revenue derived therefrom have hardly justified the increase in the

area brought under protection. It is obvious, of course, that 20 years are not a sufficiently long period to furnish any adequate return from timber resources; but it should have been possible during this period to have developed sufficiently the fuel and grazing resources to satisfy the demands of the people as well as to bring in a larger revenue to the Department. The figures disclose that this has not been done either in this district where the question of fuel and grazing facilities is of paramount importance, or in the other maidan districts, all these districts showing a gradual decline in revenue from decade to decade as compared with the additional areas brought under control while the expenditure on establisments and conservancy is slowly mounting up.

Government realise that any inferences that might be drawn from such statistics cannot be regarded as conclusive. They will, however, be glad if the Conservator of Forests will examine the present policy in regard to reservation of forest areas with special reference to existing conditions and the desirability of disafforesting such of the areas as have proved neither beneficial nor remunerative in the past nor are likely to prove so in the future and will submit his views at an early date.

26. Government desire to ackowledge the good work done by the Officiating Conservator and his staff during the year under review.

G. ARAVAMUDU IYENGAR,
Secretary to Government,
General Department.

Forest Administration Report.

District	Area of district	Area of State Forests and Plantations			Percentage of district area to forest area			Quantity of exploitation — Timber	
		1901-02	1911-12	1921-22	1901-02	1911-12	1921-22	1911-12	1921-22
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Sq. miles.	Sq. miles.	Sq. miles.	Sq. miles.				c. ft.	c. ft.
Mysore	5,498	529	616	668·71	9·62	11·22	12·16	295,986	159,947
Shimoga	4,030	347	485	767·45	8·58	12·03	19·04	324,337	379,341
Kadur	2,789	140	232	482·66	4·98	8·32	17·30	145,059	113,940
Hassan	2,666	187	206	209·11	7·01	7·73	7·84	1,569	1,328
Bangalore	3,077	327	359	416·88	10·63	11·66	13·55	4,396	24,594
Kolar	3,179	152	198	231·58	4·78	6·23	7·58	1,056	3,067
Tumkur	4,062	193	206	229·57	4·72	5·07	5·64	8,468	2,398
Chitaldrug	4,160	73	329	359·26	1·77	7·80	8·63	4,944	2,803
Total	29,462	1,948	2,632	3,365·22	6·61	8·97	11·42	..	..

District	Quantity of exploitation — Fuel		Revenue earned			Expenditure incurred		
	1911-12	1921-22	1901-02	1911-12	1921-22	1901-02	1911-12	1921-22
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	tons.	tons.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Mysore	15,331	17,450	4,75,834	6,72,416	4,16,271	1,36,211	1,89,008	2,98,515
Shimoga	826	28,768	4,46,337	6,13,174	12,02,363	95,958	1,64,446	3,81,179
Kadur	2,987	2,842	1,09,485	4,12,162	2,39,270	38,761	1,27,239	1,56,145
Hassan	1,370	2,114	1,28,226	98,101	1,52,004	41,233	34,172	31,550
Bangalore	8,408	17,112	97,030	1,12,362	2,33,397	36,355	41,620	58,287
Kolar	4,564	13,802	28,218	20,278	29,990	16,929	22,563	36,886
Tumkur	3,912	3,384	37,717	17,578	35,647	21,655	26,955	36,309
Chitaldrug	2,681	3,923	24,207	17,996	23,054	20,482	23,730	41,778
Total ...	..	...	...	...	...	....	...	...